

Judd makes his mark!

By MICHAEL KNOX: Wycombe Wanderers 2, Kingstonian 1

WYCOMBE fans have a new hero. He is 20-year-old Midlander Mark Judd who made both his side's goals in a dazzling performance against Kingstonian in Saturday's Bergr Isthmian League game at Loakes Park.

Judd, who hit the headlines when he came on as substitute to score the midweek winner against Barking, looks a player of a high quality. Although similar in stature to Mick Holifield, Judd possesses a lethal shot in addition to his great ball skills.

However Judd's main asset is a quick brain which allows him to do the right thing at the right time. This talent was obviously nurtured when a youngster in Birmingham and Aston Villa youth teams.

His arrival at Loakes Park comes at a crucial time. If he could spark Blues to a good run in the F.A. Trophy and the League, the club could rescue something from what has so far been a disappointing season.

For a while on Saturday it looked that this disappointment would continue, after Kingstonian, who stand one from bottom, had taken the lead in the fifth minute, with their first goal at Loakes Park for nine seasons.

Wycombe, who forced two

corners in the first minute, were caught by a quick break. Visitors' full-back Lavelle went round John Priestley on the left and crossed into the penalty area. Neither Alan Phillips and Keith Mead could clear the ball and Steve Hill drove it from close range.

The goal owed something to the ground conditions as the cross skidded awkwardly on the greasy surface. But it was a miracle that they were playing at all.

Quick thaw

Twenty four hours earlier with three inches of snow on the pitch, few would have expected a game. But a quick thaw allied to the hard work of groundsman Jock Sheppard made the pitch quite playable, although it cut up badly before the end.

Blues took time to adapt to the surface but they gradually gained the upper hand thanks to the industry of Howard Kennedy in mid-field and equalised with a scrambled goal in the 26th minute.

Judd made it out of nothing. Receiving the ball just inside the penalty area, he turned quickly and sent a low cross into the goalmouth, and Steve Long netted the ball at the second attempt, while sitting on the ground.

Kingstonian's tall coloured striker Fitz Samoth went within inches of regaining the lead when his fierce shot screamed just outside an upright but it was Wycombe who went ahead just before half-time.

Judd was once again the key figure. This time turning up on the left wing, he spotted Priestley completely unmarked on the right and found him with a pinpoint pass. Priestley had almost too much time to shoot but he slid it coolly under John Overton's arms for his third goal of the season.

He should have had his fourth a minute later when Long's cross was headed straight to his feet in front of goal. But, perhaps, still thinking of his goal, he hit the ball against the bar.

Unlucky

A minute after the interval Judd was desperately unlucky when he hit a post with a snap shot on the turn from 15 yards. It rebounded to Priestley whose reactions were too slow to convert this chance into a goal.

Then with the Kingstonian defence in disarray, Judd saw a 20 yard curling shot tipped over the bar by Overton.

Had either of these chances gone in, then I would have expected Kingstonian to have been overwhelmed. But Wycombe went off the boil a little and the visitors had one great chance to snatch an equaliser when Hill had to clear a close range header. But Maskell saved at the second attempt and the danger was over.

Before the end Overton had to be on the alert to save well from Priestley and Holifield, who amazingly has scored only three times this season.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, S. Hardwick, K. Mead, A. Phillips, J. Priestley, M. Judd, M. Holifield, S. Long (sub: D. E. Evans 80 mins), H. Kennedy, T. Scott.

KINGSTONIAN: J. Overton; D. Vaughan, M. Lavelle, J. Piguellen, M. Whatford, G. Stille, J. Godfrey, P. Laycock (sub: D. Adams 67 mins), F. Samoth, S. Hill, L. Mitchell.

Referee: R. Smith (Middle Barton). **Half-time 2-1. Scorers:** Wycombe — Long (26 mins), Priestley (45); Kingstonian (5).



Wycombe's new star Mark Judd crosses the ball into the goalmouth as Steve Long on Saturday.

Bobby misses Senior Cup

WYCOMBE manager Andy Williams echoed the feelings of the fans when he praised Mark Judd after Saturday's match. He said, "Judd looks an exciting sort of player. He is currently on a month's trial but if he continues to play like this we'll happily extend it."

Fans will have a further chance to see Judd when he plays against Maidenhead United in the second round of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup tonight (Tuesday) at Loakes Park.

But one man who will not be playing is full-back Bobby Davies who missed the Kingstonian game with an aggravated knee injury. He should be fit soon but the same cannot be said for Dave Allanson, who has been out nearly three months with knee trouble.

It now appears that 'Big Dave' might have to undergo surgery for the removal of a cartilage. If that is the case, he will be out for the rest of the season.

Maidenhead, managed by former Wanderer Geoff Anthony and including another, Derek Harris, have moved up to a challenging position in the Isthmian League Division 1 and could give Wycombe a stiff test, in a competition where Blues rarely excel.

Wycombe's main concern at present is with the F.A. Trophy. Both Mr Williams and assistant Howard Wells travelled to Blyth yesterday to watch their first round replay with Gooles.

The winners of that tie will be at home to the Blues. Wanderers have hired a train for February 3 to visit whichever team gets through. More details later.

Kiosk their goal

Wycombe Wanderers will have to put in another application before the district council will allow them to put up a lottery kiosk in the Octagon.

But even then, it became clear last week, the chance of winning approval is slim.

During a short debate at the environmental health committee meeting approval on highway grounds was given to the district council's lottery kiosk remaining in the Octagon outside the bus station cafe.

Wycombe Wanderers' supporters in the public gallery at the committee meeting obviously expected their deferred application to be discussed, and possibly approved.